

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 00136 041852Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9633
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN, GERMANY
USDOSOUTH

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USEC

USOECN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, IT
SUBJECT: LABOR'S GENERAL STRIKE PLANS

REF: ROME 20857

1. THE CCU SECRETARIAT (THE FEDERATION OF THE THREE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS) CONVENES JANUARY 5 TO DECIDE UPON THE HOLDING OF A NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE. CURRENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE CCU WILL CALL FOR AN EIGHT-HOUR STRIKE ON/ABOUT JANUARY 18.

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PAGE 02 ROME 00136 041852Z

2. ONE POSSIBILITY FOR HEADING OFF THE STRIKE PLANS IS OFFERED BY A DECISION REACHED JANUARY 3 BY CCU LEADERS. AT THE INITIATIVE OF CISL AND UIL LEADERS--PRIMARILY CISL DEPUTY SEC GEN CARNITI--THE CCU HAS RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO AN INVITATION MADE DECEMBER 29 BY PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI TO ENGAGE IN FURTHER DISCUSSIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PROPOSALS. NO DATE HAS BEEN SET AS YET FOR SUCH A MEETING.

3. HERETOFORE, THE CCU HAS JUDGED THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS TO BE THOROUGHLY INADEQUATE. THE PROPOSED GENERAL STRIKE IS INTENDED TO DRAMATIZE LABOR'S DEMAND FOR, INTER ALIA, GREATLY STEPPED-UP PUBLIC INITIATIVES IN PRESERVING THE JOBS IN THREATENED GOVERNMENT-OWNED ENTERPRISES, AND IN THE CREATION OF NEW JOBS.

4. COMMENT: THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL, IN TANDEM WITH THE PCI, IS CONTINUING ITS RECENT REVERSAL OF ATTITUDE BY PUSHING HARDEST FOR THE GENERAL STRIKE, AND IN SEEMING TO CARE LEAST WHETHER THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT SURVIVES OR NOT. THOUGH THE CCU HAS SOUGHT TO INDICATE THAT A GENERAL STRIKE WOULD NOT BE INTENDED AS AN ACT TO BRING DOWN THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, IT COULD HAVE SUCH AN EFFECT NEVERTHELESS. WHILE PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI HAS POINTEDLY NOTED THAT NOTHING IN THE CONSTITUTION FORCES A GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN IN CONSEQUENCE OF A GENERAL STRIKE, PREVIOUS EMBATTLED GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN TIPPED OVER PURSUANT TO SUCH PRESSURES (THE LAST RUMOR GOVERNMENT, IN OCTOBER 1974, IS THE MOST RECENT CASE IN POINT). GARDNER

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